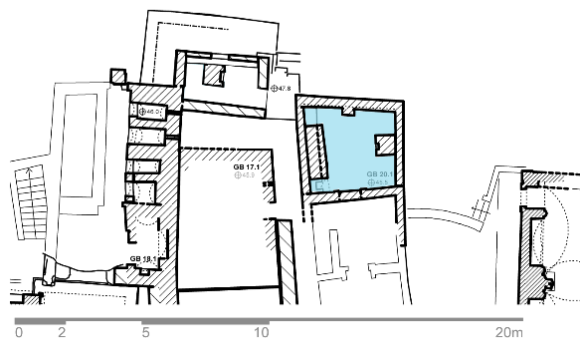


## Tomb no. GB 20 (Hermokrates)



### Description of the interior design

A stuccoed and painted grave stele in a shelter house built by adobe masonry. The stele is built into the eastern wall, so three sides are visible. The stele core is constructed of adobe masonry covered with a lime plaster. A whitewash on the top plaster layer serves as a base for a wall painting. The stele is decorated with a limestone ashlar masonry imitation with red painted joints. Additionally the middle of the stele and the centre niche are decorated with Greek inscriptions.

In a former, not dated, restoration treatment the upper part of the stele, the shelf and small defects of the plaster layer were overworked with a white repair plaster. The stele surface was unevenly covered with a wax or paraffin film.

### Condition before treatment

There is a layer of dust on everything. Additionally, traces of mud runners dirty the stele. The wax or paraffin cover became partly opaque and grey. So the decorations are no longer completely visible.

The plaster layer is partially lost and exposes the adobe masonry. Where visible the sun dried clay bricks show a sanding surface. The plaster layers are widely detached from the adobe masonry, and show fine lined cracks.

Partially the paint layers are flaking and rolls off the underground like paper, due to the very thick and uneven wax or paraffin cover. The surface shows an ongoing deterioration and the decoration is at risk.

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### Treatment

The following steps of emergency measures were done 2009 and 2010 by the conservator Alexandra Winkels. The architectural surface was dry cleaned by soft brushes and wet cleaned with iso-propanol. For temporary protection fragile parts of the plaster layer were faced with Japanese paper and a cellulose-ether. The residues of the wax or paraffin cover, spilled over the surface during a former restoration treatment, could be reduced and the flaking paint layer simultaneously reattached. The reduction was done by using a special conservation-iron to and Japanese tissue as interlayer to melt and remove the waxy coat.

The exposed adobe masonry surface was structurally strengthened with a silica binder. The plaster layers were stabilized by edging detached fragments with a lime mortar. To improve the bondage between coat and support, voids have been filled by grout injections based on a dispersed lime binder. Gaps in the plaster were closed with lime mortar.



### Condition after treatment

Emergency measures have been carried out to prevent further decay. The tomb house is closed by a sealed door. In addition the tomb was provided with a new window covered with netting wire to prevent birds from nesting in the shelter house. The mesh cover of the window should be checked regularly.

Status: October 2010